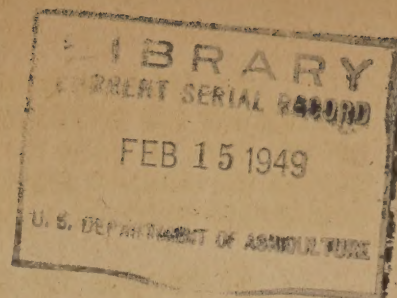


Today's Home Builds Tomorrow's World*

Madge J. Reese
Field Agent, Extension Service,
U. S. Department of Agriculture



One of the many satisfactions of being an extension worker is having the privilege of working with interesting and understanding men and women. I have always been proud of that privilege, and never have I been prouder than I am at this moment. To associate with you splendid women gives one confidence, encouragement and, may I say, "a lift." As I have observed you at this meeting, I am constantly mindful of the fact that rural America is most fortunate in having the trained and intelligent guidance of 3,320 county home demonstration agents and assistants. It is a delightful experience to work with your very capable president, Louella Condon. She represents you well wherever you send her.

At a recent meeting of the Committee on Extension Organization and Policy of the Land-Grant College Association, National Home Demonstration Week for 1949 was approved. The four regional home demonstration field agents of the Federal Extension office have considered a possible theme. None of us could improve upon Today's Home Builds Tomorrow's World, and unless a theme of equally striking timeliness presents itself we shall hold to the 1947-48 theme. The slogan, Today's Home Builds Tomorrow's World, implies a very serious responsibility upon you and me and all extension workers.

First, we must concern ourselves that extension education is of a combination type of guidance, training, and instruction that provides all members of families in today's homes with education for making a living and education for living.

In various ways and means we process a liberal education in terms of life's problems as men and women face them. We succeed in giving human orientation to extension programs, and we are seeing to it that the content of programs is revelant to needs and satisfactions of families in today's homes.

No group of educators do a better job of defining long-time and immediate objectives and setting up definite goals than do State and county extension workers. We think we understand our aims and we believe we are headed in the right direction. President Morrill, of the University of Minnesota, recently said in his presidential address at the Convention of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities:

"No large aim is ever fully accomplished. Persistence in old patterns, however resourceful and valid in their day, is never sufficient for a future which all too soon becomes the pressing present."

*Presented at the Annual National Home Demonstration Agents' Conference, December 1, 1948, Chicago, Ill.

Let us take heed of President Morrill's wise statement and always alter and adjust our patterns to fit changing situations and needs. Occasionally, we may have to make as drastic changes in the patterns as have taken place in styles in women's dresses the past 2 years, but we can always adjust on the foundation pattern - education for making a living and education for living.

It is well for us to ask ourselves the following questions. Does our extension teaching, through programs and the methods we use in carrying out programs, give or enhance the values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills that will enable rural men and women to live rightly and well, and will assist in equipping youth for today and tomorrow?

Do we develop in the men and women, who take advantage of extension education, a philosophy of living which makes for greater happiness and contentment?

Are we cultivating in our rural population a sense of social responsibility toward community, county, and State?

To keep this growing and powerful democracy in working order, we shall always need men and women who take citizenship seriously. Really, tomorrow's world depends, not upon the direction education takes in the distant future, but in the immediate days ahead, tomorrow, December 2, 1948, and day after tomorrow, December 3, 1948.

All of us know there is an urgent and serious present need for an understanding of national and international situations and affairs on the part of both rural and urban people. Is it not important for future civilization that, as individuals, we feel a deep sense of world citizenship? Are we, as extension workers, informing ourselves well enough to help others to a clearer understanding of the interdependence of different peoples of the world? This is not politics but just good sense to take a personal responsibility in fostering peace and preserving our own democracy. As we go about our daily work, we need to ask ourselves these questions and other questions if we live up to our theme - - Today's Homes Build Tomorrow's World.

Throughout the years, extension activities are based on the belief that the desire for higher standards of living and the earning of funds for their realization are dependent upon each other, and they must go hand in hand. The means to both these ends is education in its broadest sense. In this day of our greatest agricultural prosperity, we must not give less attention to the rural families in all sections of the country who, for various reasons, have never been fired by a spark of pride to raise their standards of living. They need our help most. Our approach is different, as we have to work toward creating the desire for a better home and the willingness of the family to help itself. Home demonstration work has wrought many changes for the better in thousands of such homes throughout the years, and will continue to do so.

Although the United States can rightly claim the highest average rural standard of living of any country in the world at the present time, you and I know there are still many urgent needs.

Rural housing is a big problem which will need attention for many years to come. Rural people, on the whole, need to improve their health and to be guided in cooperating in solving community health problems and in securing medical facilities. Little has been done in organized recreation in rural communities. Educational work in family relationships has only had a good start. Consumers' education has only taken the first steps in development. With 3,288,672 babies having been born in the years 1940-46, and with those born in 1947 and 1948, certainly home demonstration programs need to emphasize child feeding and care with young mothers.

Food and nutrition and food production are always vital and needed programs. We have a long way to go in making rural America beautiful in farm surroundings and countryside. And the expanding 4-H Club programs claim much attention of home demonstration agents.

All this sounds overwhelming, but extension workers know how to attack big jobs and enjoy doing so. With farm families and extension agents working together, it can be done.

Yes--Today's Homes Build Tomorrow's World and Better Homes Will Build a Better World.

Better agriculture means better homes - better homes mean better people - better people mean a better nation and a better world - today and tomorrow.

... ..
... ..
... ..
... ..
... ..
... ..
... ..
... ..
... ..
... ..

... ..
... ..

... ..